

Section 2 – Executive Summary

Ryerson Creek and Muskegon Lake are portions of the Muskegon Lake Area of Concern (AOC), see map next page. Over the past several years, state and federal agencies have worked with the local public advisory committee (PAC) to evaluate and address potential risks posed by sediments contaminated with polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), various metals, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). In August 2004, a report titled "Sediment Survey of Three Tributaries of Muskegon Lake" identified sediments in Ryerson Creek as impacting localized populations of aquatic organisms due to elevated levels of PAHs and metals (Gannett Fleming, 2004). The report concluded that further study of the sediments was necessary, primarily from Getty Street downstream to the mouth. Previous sediment sampling of Muskegon Lake near the Division Street outfall in 1999 documented elevated levels of metals and sediment toxicity (Rediske, 2002). Historically, the Division Street outfall discharged industrial wastewater from many industries located along the lakeshore in Muskegon however, at this time, the outfall only discharges storm water. Several parks and recreational areas, including trails along Ryerson Creek, are located in the riparian zone of this urban stream. Recreational users may ingest and/or come into direct contact with these contaminants and their activities may cause contaminant re-suspension and transport to downstream locations, including Muskegon Lake. The primary goal of this project is to gather additional sediment chemistry and toxicity data to further delineate the spatial sediment contamination impacting aquatic life within Ryerson Creek and Muskegon Lake in the vicinity of the Division Street outfall. The secondary goal is to develop engineering designs estimating the amount and areas of contaminated sediment that may be removed to support the development of a focused feasibility study.